

Homeschool P.E.

(...for the P.E. Challenged Mom)

by

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Are you a P.E.-challenged Mom? I am! I grew up in a traditional school setting, and I just despised physical education class, or “phys ed” as my teachers called it. I didn’t enjoy running around in the heat, making a fool of myself as I tried to catch balls, or changing in the locker room. Yuck!

So as a homeschooling mom, I was in a predicament. I understood the good sense in teaching physical fitness to my children. I realized the need for getting them off the couch and moving. But it was hard for me to set a good example when my memories of exercising and sports were less than fond.

In addition, as the mother of five young children, I lacked the time to make lesson plans for yet another subject. Our day was already full with math, grammar, reading, writing, history, science, chores, music, service for others, housecleaning....

So I needed a plan. I talked to my husband, who has been involved with athletics on the high school level for many years. I read books on physical education, written by and for homeschoolers. I searched the Internet.

The result was a set of simple lesson plans that would take me through several years of physical education. These plans are intended for elementary-age children, since these are the ages of my own children. I planned for ways to get us all up and exercising together, since this was a need in our home. Finally, I tried to make it fun, since I knew that I wouldn’t want to continue if it wasn’t – and if Mom doesn’t want to exercise, why would the kids want to?

Ready to join us? Let’s go!

Anne Elliott

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Note: Use caution and discernment when visiting any of the websites referenced. Foundations Press cannot be responsible for the content of any of the suggested sites.

Before Your Family Begins:

1. **Set reasonable goals for each person.** Does Johnny need to strengthen his upper arms? Is Suzie a slow runner? Does Philip need to get outside and get more fresh air? Does Melissa want to learn how to play softball?
 - ✓ Photocopy the “Challenge Goals” sheet on p. 28 and post on your refrigerator.
2. **Do an equipment check.** We tried to choose activities that will use things that your family very likely already owns. Of course, you can always feel free to substitute items that might work just as well. Don’t have a baseball bat? A long cardboard tube that used to hold wrapping paper can make a fun bat. Don’t have bean bags? Fill old socks with beans, then quickly sew the ends up tight. We’re assuming if your family members are already huge fans of baseball or bean-bag games, you won’t even have this problem. The rest of us can pinch pennies. ☺ We’ve made a list of equipment you’ll probably need, and you can see it on p. 13.
3. **Choose a place for everything, and put everything in its place.** We use large plastic storage containers, purchased inexpensively at our local supercenter. You’ll also need to think about *where* you’ll do P.E. each day, in good weather as well as in bad. Do you have a paved driveway? Do you have a big backyard? Is there a place for balls to be played with without the fear of their rolling into a road? Is there a room in your house where pillow fights and relay races can be enjoyed? Finally, begin thinking about *when* you’ll exercise each day. Our family enjoys some variety, but we’ve found that mid-morning and mid-afternoon are two of our favorite times – you know, when everyone is sleepy!
4. **Assign helpers.** Mom, you can’t do everything, and if you try to add P.E. to an already packed schedule, you’ll probably “drop out” after a week or two. Allow your children to do your preparation work for you. You’ll be teaching them valuable life skills, you’ll increase their anticipation for exercising, and you’ll relieve yourself of some extra burden. We’ve chosen the following helpers in our home:

- ❑ **An Equipment Checker** - This helper will look at the week's lesson plans and make sure all the equipment is ready to use. Each day, he or she will bring the equipment to your P.E. area.
- ❑ **A "Water Boy" (or Girl)** - This helper will prepare water bottles (or some substitute) each morning. He or she will make sure the water is cold and ready to drink both before and after P.E. time. (Please, Mom, no sugary drinks. Read all labels! Sugar and popular sports drinks will only sabotage your bodies!)
- ❑ **A Goal Checker** - Homeschooling moms are notorious about good intentions and poor follow-through. Do you want your children to set goals? Allow one of your little helpers to hang a goal chart on the refrigerator each week and to hold his or her siblings accountable. This helper can also make "announcements" at dinner when a family member has done exceptionally well!

5. **Be ready with alternate ideas for busy times.** You probably realize that just because these lesson plans contain 36 weeks does not mean you'll get them all done. However, if you're like me, a few weeks of the flu will get you so out of the habit of exercising that you're likely to quit P.E. altogether (until next year). A back-up plan is needed so your children will know that P.E. is a mandatory subject. When your life is crazy, be prepared with a children's exercise video or DVD, a friend you can call on to take your children sledding or bicycling, or a father who might take on the challenge for a week or two. Note: Love to Learn is a company that has several excellent exercise and dance videos, plus fun equipment that would work in a pinch. <http://www.lovetolearn.net>
6. **Print or copy all the plans, charts, and idea charts before you begin.** Laminate things if it would help. Let your kids cut up the idea cards. Get a plastic storage container to hold the cards, put the charts on a clipboard, and store the plans in a small 3-ring binder. Don't start now and organize later. You'll only be setting yourselves up for failure.

Equipment Needed:

- ☐ Cones - at least 4
- ☐ Jump Ropes - one per child, plus a longer one for group games
- ☐ Hula Hoops - minimum 4
- ☐ Balls - many sizes and textures
- ☐ Bicycles (optional)
- ☐ Timer or stopwatch
- ☐ Peppy, fun music - to be used on days when enthusiasm lags
- ☐ Beanbags or socks filled with rice
- ☐ Clothespins
- ☐ Pillows
- ☐ Balance Beam - 2"x4"x6'
- ☐ Ball attached to a paddle
- ☐ Balloons
- ☐ Tape Measure - nice & long
- ☐ Most Important - a smile! ☺

Other Equipment You'd Like to Add to This List:

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Some Things to Consider:

1. The Bible says to “train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:7-8). Be sure to begin your homeschooling day with Bible study so that no matter what other interruptions come, your priorities will be straight. You’ll have taken time to train your children in godliness. On the other hand, you may want to schedule physical education for later in the day, aware of the fact that outside circumstances might cause you to skip this subject sometimes. That’s okay! Keep your priorities straight.
2. Include some work and service in your children’s day. Hard, physical work is the best form of exercise, and it’s a gift that few children receive. In addition, learning to serve others daily is a life skill that takes plenty of energy and endurance, yet it will further your goal of training your children in godliness.
3. We have been asked if our lesson plans conform to state and national education standards. After looking at numerous standards, we realized that many of the standards overlap with other subject areas. For instance, in the state of West Virginia, the following seven components are objectives for their physical education programs:
 - A. Safety
 - B. Lifetime Wellness
 - C. Physical Activity
 - D. Social Skill Development
 - E. Movement/Rhythmic Development
 - F. Motor Skill Development
 - G. Computer and Technology

I’m sure it’s not difficult for you to see how many of these areas you are already teaching to your children, such as social skill development, safety, and computer skills. We chose to focus on the areas of physical activity, motor skill development, and a limited introduction to lifetime wellness.

4. Speaking of safety, injuries are a concern to all homeschooling moms, aren't they? According to <http://www.amateur-sports.com> most injuries are minor, such as sprains and bruises. However, no mother wants a trip to the emergency room or the family doctor. Many injuries can be prevented! To prevent them, however, you must understand what causes them.

- ✓ Moving muscles that haven't been warmed up.
- ✓ Moving muscles that haven't been stretched.
- ✓ Using improper equipment or space, such as not wearing shoes or running in a tight, crowded space.
- ✓ Not understanding the rules of a sport or exercise.
- ✓ Exercising when hungry, sick, or too tired.

This is why common sense must rule the day. We would advise you to help prevent the pain and suffering of injuries by doing the following:

- ✓ Be sure your children get a physical exam before beginning (and at least once a year thereafter).
- ✓ Don't ask your children to exercise beyond their limits. Toddlers should not be required to do 50 sit-ups.
- ✓ Do not allow your children to play in organized sports or to exercise without proper supervision and instruction.
- ✓ Don't stretch or exercise to the point of pain. We used to hear it said, "No pain, no gain." This is just not true! If your child says, "Ouch," then stop!
- ✓ Exercise sessions should only take place on days in which your children have had nourishing meals, plenty of water, and lots of rest.
- ✓ You should all be eating nourishing meals every day! ☺
- ✓ Stretch your muscles every day.
- ✓ Always start and finish strenuous activity with a warm-up and stretching time.

5. The games and activities in this curriculum were intended for homeschooling families with at least two or three children. Since not all families are this large, you may need to adapt some activities. How? Mom and Dad can play along! You could join with other homeschooling families locally. You could invite your neighbor children to exercise with you each afternoon. Be creative and enjoy exercising together.

What Will You Be Doing During P.E. Time?

- ✓ A daily “Stretch and Flex”
- ✓ **Daily real-life exercising**, such as strength-training, movement of large muscle groups, playing crazy games outdoors, or completing “Challenge Tasks.”

What This P.E. Curriculum Includes:

- ✓ **Monday** - This is a great day to introduce new goals and to teach new skills. (See “Challenges” on page 17 for more information.)
- ✓ **Tuesday** - Randomly choose a “Movement Card.”
- ✓ **Wednesday** - Use this day to learn about popular American team sports. Some days will involve quiet research while other days will involve active participation. This curriculum allows three weeks to study each sport. See page 19 for more information.
- ✓ **Thursday** - As the week draws to a close, plan for a fun, crazy, wild, and ACTIVE family game. Be sure your chosen helpers have done their “jobs” beforehand. See page 24 for more information.
- ✓ **Friday** - Today is different. The schedule shows no formal exercise time, since many families have one day per week to run errands or join with other homeschooling families. However, it would be wise to take a look at our weekly small research project for interesting peeks at how our bodies work. These projects can be completed as a family throughout the day and into the weekend. See page 27 for more information.

As you might imagine, these days are simply suggestions. Please feel free to take our plan and rearrange it to fit your family and your situation. There is no right or wrong way to do this!

Moving Time:

What should we do today?

- ✓ Monday - Challenges
- ✓ Tuesday - Movement Card Games (pick one and play together)
- ✓ Wednesday - Sports
- ✓ Thursday - Games
- ✓ Friday - Quiet Health Research

Movement Card Games

In our first edition of *Homeschool P.E.*, we suggested that families cut out “cards,” laminate them, and shuffle them. Each week, they would randomly choose a card to play. We’ve decided that it would be easier to list all the “Movement Card” games in the back of this book, so that cards aren’t lost in the house somewhere.

We suggest using two dice. Roll them. The first die corresponds to the first number of the “Movement Card” game, and the second die corresponds to the second number. For instance, if you rolled a six and a two, you would do “Movement Card” 6.2 (in the back of this book).

You may want to choose the game *before* doing “Stretch & Flex,” so that your “Equipment Checker” can have all the supplies you need ready and you can begin playing immediately.

Challenges

Page 27 details some fun challenges that your children should work on throughout the year. As you introduce a new challenge, allow them to set a goal that they would like to reach. Once challenges have been introduced, Mom should only have to supervise from a distance.

Sports & Games

Once a week, we will introduce a common American sport or game. We will learn the rules and some basic skills necessary for success. Don’t expect mastery of any of these games! These activities will only provide enough information to *introduce* the sport or game. Just have fun and keep the competition friendly! More information is found on page 31 for sports and page 37 for games.

“Movement Card” Games

In our first edition of Homeschool P.E., we suggested that families cut out “cards,” laminate them, and shuffle them. Each week, they would randomly choose a card to play. We’ve decided that it would be easier to list all the “Movement Cards” in one section of this book, so that the cards aren’t lost in the house somewhere.

We suggest using two dice. Roll them. The first die corresponds to the first number of the “Movement Card” and the second die corresponds to the second number. For instance, if you rolled a six and a two, you would do “Movement Card” 6.2.

These “Movement Card” ideas will provide your family with hours of fun and memory making. Enjoy!

1.1 Rainy Day Race:

On a rainy day that isn’t too cold, it’s fun to have a race around the house. Start at the front door and *GO!*

Indoors: Have a race from the west end of the house to the east end, or from the basement to the top story and back, etc. Note: This game is fun on sunny days, too!

1.2 Jump Rope Game:

“Apples, peaches, pears and plums

Tell me when your birthday comes...”

... then say the months of the year (January, February, March, etc.), trying to not miss until you reach the month of your birthday.

1.3 Spell and Run:

Place a clipboard loaded with plenty of scrap paper and a marker about 25 yards away. Have kids line up at the starting line. Call out a spelling word appropriate for the child and yell *GO!* (You could also substitute math facts.) Child runs to the clipboard, writes the correct answer, and races back. Award fastest times back to the finish line.

Indoors: Place the clipboard at the end of an obstacle course, so that kids exercise by climbing over a pile of pillows, under the kitchen table, run up stairs, etc.

1.4 Jump Rope Game:

“Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn around,

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, touch the ground

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, show your shoe

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, that will do!

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, go upstairs-

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, say your prayers-

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, turn out the lights-

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, say good-night!”

The children act out the words in the rhyme. For example, when they say go upstairs, the child pretends to climb the stairs.

P.E. Time – Week 1

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Stretch and Flex	<input type="checkbox"/> (See p. 19-24)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice Challenges Learned So Far		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Moving Time	Learn a new challenge.	Choose a “Movement Card” game (p. 115).	Learn about a team sport.	Play a fun game.	Do a health research project.

This week’s challenge:

Challenge #1 – Perfect Push-Up

See p. 27.

Be sure to set goals for the year (using chart on p. 28), based upon the ages of your children.

Goals: Aim to be able to do this many push-ups:

- 6-7 yrs. old, 10-15 push-ups
- 8-9 yrs. old, 20-25 push-ups
- 10 yrs. and older, 30 or more

It is recommended that you set a metronome or clap out a rhythm for one push-up every three seconds. Your child should aim to complete the goal number of push-ups at this speed without tiring.

This week’s sport: Volleyball

Learn More:

Volleyball: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volleyball>

Variations of the Game: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volleyball#Variations>

This week’s game: Alamo

Place five or six balls in the middle of the room. All players touch the outside walls of the room. When a leader yells, “Alamo,” the game begins. Anyone who gets a ball throws it, trying to hit others to get them out. The person who gets hit with a ball is out of the game and must sit down with legs crossed until the game is over. If the ball is thrown at a person who catches the ball, then the person who threw the ball is out. One catch – if you have a ball you cannot walk with it! The only way you can move with a ball is if you roll the ball on the floor. Any person caught walking with a ball is out.

This week’s health research project:

Which fats are good for us, and which can harm us? A good website is:

<http://www.westonaprice.org/knowyourfats/index.html>

P.E. Time – Week 2

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Stretch and Flex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice Challenges Learned So Far	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Moving Time	Learn a new challenge.	Choose a “Movement Card.”	Learn about a team sport.	Play a fun game.	Do a health research project.

This week’s challenge:

Challenge #2 – Curl-Up

See p. 27.

Be sure to set goals for the year (using chart on p. 28), based upon the ages of your children as explained on p. 27.

This week’s sport: Volleyball

Appreciate More:

Olympic volleyball is our family’s favorite way of watching this sport.

<https://www.olympic.org/videos/volleyball>

Catching a local high school game can also be a lot of fun.

This week’s game: Beanbag Toss

The kids line up behind a cone. Mom stands 10-15 feet in front of them, holding a hula hoop in front of her. The kids take turns trying to throw a beanbag through the hoop. (Don’t flinch, Mom!) After a throw, the child moves to the back of the line and the next child gets a shot. Whoever gets the most beanbags through the hoop wins.

This week’s health research project:

Trans-fat: What is it, and why is it so dangerous?

<https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2009/12/24/trans-fats-can-be-deadly.aspx>

P.E. Time – Week 3

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Stretch and Flex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Practice Challenges Learned So Far	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Moving Time	Learn a new challenge.	Choose a “Movement Card.”	Learn about a team sport.	Play a fun game.	Do a health research project.

This week’s challenge:

Challenge #3 – Sit and Reach
See p. 27.

This week’s sport: Volleyball

Play More:

The best way to enjoy this game is simply to play it! Playing a simple form of volleyball in a swimming pool is also fantastic.

This week’s game: Bop

Blow up enough balloons for each player (plus maybe a few extra). Have the kids line up, all in a line. Mom says, “Ready, set, BOP!” Whoever gets bopped 10 times is out!

This week’s health research project:

Learning about saturated fat

<https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/06/23/whole-food-supplement-dangers.aspx>